

SITE - OYSTER BAYOU, ATCHAFALAYA BAY, LA

SITE CODE - ABOB

TARGET SPECIES - *Crassostrea virginica*

NOMINAL SITE CENTER - 29° 15.33' N

91° 08.17' W

LOCATED ON NOAA CHART - 11356

SITE ACCESS - The only access to the site is by boat, via a circuitous route of over 20 mi that will take a minimum of an hour in good weather. The only launch ramp is at DuLarge Sporting Goods, at the end of LA Hwy. 315. Proceed southwest down Bayou du Large to the channel that joins Lake Mechant and Caillou Lake. From here, there are a number of different ways to get to Oyster Bayou. One route is to cross Caillou Lake and go down Grand Bayou du Large and out into the Gulf. From here, head west some 10 mi to the large navigation marker (29° 12.73' N, 91° 07.70' W) just to the south of the mouth of Oyster Bayou into the open Gulf, and then west along the beach front to Oyster Bayou. A more circuitous route is possible through Lake Merchant, then winding through the Blue Hammock Bayou and into Four Leagues Bay. From here, head south to Oyster Bayou. However, the western end of Lake Mechant and the eastern section of the Blue Hammock Bayou are very shallow, and should not be attempted except in a shallow draft boat at medium to high tide.

SITE DESCRIPTION - The sampling stations are all intertidal and are located along the length of Oyster Bayou, which joins Four League Bay with the Gulf of Mexico to the south. The *entire* area is private lease. Station 1 is located 300 m south of the old shrimp drying camp (on the east bank) on a small reef on the west side of the bayou. Station 2 is located right next to the old shrimp drying camp on the east bank, and Station 3 is another 250 m to the north on the west bank.

OYSTER COLLECTIONS

- 1995 Oysters of all sizes were abundant throughout the entire area, occurring in singles and clusters on the reefs and mudflats along the edge of the bayou and *Spartina alterniflora* marshland. The entire area had been closed to oystering by the LA Department of Health.
- 1996 No collection.
- 1997 As usual in this most prolific commercial lease, oysters were very abundant and of good size (4-8 cm).

SEDIMENT COLLECTIONS

- 1995 No sediments were collected this year. Sediment Station 1 is located in a small cove on the west bank, at the mouth of Oyster Bayou. Station 2 is located on the east side shoreline, 0.5 mi north of Station 1 and 300 m south of the old shrimp drying camp. Station 3 is located north of station 2 on the east shore, at the southernmost pilings of the old dock next to the three abandoned old wooden buildings with rusty tin roofs.
- 1996 No collection.
- 1997 The sediments were collected by hand using the scoop. Sediments were brown to dark grey silty mud without odor.

SAMPLING METHODS

Oyster - hand

Sediment - hand held stainless steel scoop

WATER DEPTH - intertidal, 0 - 2.0 m